

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please cancel Claims 8 through 12 without prejudice as being directed to a non-elected invention.

Please add new Claim 18.

Please amend Claims 1 and 13 as follows:

1. **(Currently Amended)** A composite material comprising:
a base;
a first fiber in contact with the base and having a cross sectional diameter of greater than about 3 microns; and
a plurality of elongated second fibers having a cross sectional diameter of less than approximately 1 micron wherein the plurality of second fibers are is predominately in contact with a distal portion of the first fiber.
2. **(Original)** The composite material of Claim 1, wherein said plurality of elongated second fibers is bonded to a portion of said first fiber.
3. **(Original)** The composite material of Claim 2, wherein said portion comprises the tips.
4. **(Original)** The composite material of Claim 1, wherein at least some of said plurality of elongated second fibers comprises multi-walled nanotubes.
5. **(Original)** The composite material of Claim 4, wherein said multi-walled nanotubes are hollow.
6. **(Original)** The composite material of Claim 5, wherein said multi-walled nanotubes and said first fiber both comprise carbon.
7. **(Original)** The composite material of Claim 6, wherein said first fiber is nickel coated.
- 8-12 **(Cancelled)**
13. **(Currently Amended)** A composite material comprising:
a base;

a plurality of fibers having first and second ends, said second ends being in contact with said base, and said fibers being predominantly aligned and forming a sheet that extends in a direction substantially perpendicular to the plurality of fibers; and

a carbon fiber material located predominantly proximate to said first end and having an overall diameter substantially greater than a diameter of said first end, said carbon fiber material forming a pliable contact surface being substantially parallel with said first end, said pliable contact surface having a higher degree of mechanical resilience than the plurality of fibers in response to application of an external load.

14. **(Original)** The composite material of Claim 13, wherein said plurality of fibers have a diameter of more than about 3 microns, and wherein said carbon fiber material comprises a plurality of nanofibrils having a diameter of less than about 1 micron.

15. **(Original)** The composite material of Claim 13, wherein said plurality of fibers have a diameter of more than about 3 microns, and wherein said carbon fiber material comprises an unaligned discontinuous powder of nanofibrils with diameters of about 50-300 nanometers and lengths of about 20 to 80 microns.

16. **(Original)** The composite material of Claim 14, wherein said plurality of fibers comprise carbon.

17. **(Original)** The composite material of Claim 16, wherein said plurality of fibers is nickel coated.

18. **(New)** A composite material comprising:

a plurality of fibers having first and second ends, said fibers being predominantly aligned and having a diameter of more than about 3 microns; and

a carbon fiber material located predominantly proximate to said first end and comprising an unaligned discontinuous powder of nanofibrils with diameters of about 50-300 nanometers and lengths of about 20 to 80 microns, said carbon fiber material forming a pliable contact surface being substantially parallel with said first end.